



CAMPAIGN
FOR
REAL ALE

Back in lockdown (again) special

Durham Drinker



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Hello and welcome to another limited edition, online only, advert-free, paperless issue of Durham Drinker.

I had hoped that this issue would be full of stories of pubs springing back to life after the enforced closures of the spring and early summer, but the second lockdown put paid to that.

Since then, the North East has been put into Tier 3, meaning that the proposed re-opening date of the beginning of December has been postponed. Without getting political, the decision –making process that has led us to this situation has left a lot to be desired and a lot of questions unanswered. The efforts of the pubs and clubs in our area to comply with Covid regulations during those few happy weeks they were allowed to be open over the summer are to be praised, with the vast majority providing an environment which both satisfied the requirements of social distancing and track and trace, and was comfortable for the customers. During this second lockdown, images and news reports of behaviour in retail establishments make you wonder if all the hard work put in, and heartache suffered, by our publicans and licensees was really worth it.

Those same licensees, along with our local brewers and some off-licences, have helped keep the hospitality industry ticking over the best they can, by providing beer to take away, or even delivering it right to your door. While that has kept our thirsts slaked, it has not—indeed, can not—replace the social aspect of having a beer with friends, having a game of darts or dominoes, or just being in the company of others somewhere other than your own home. As well as making us pub-goers a bit miserable the situation has brought the very real threat of many of our pubs and clubs simply not opening up again. The number in CAMRA Durham’s area that have closed their doors “permanently” has so far, been low, Hopefully, when things get back to whatever passes for normal in the future, someone can breathe life back into the Black Bull and Frosterley and its namesake in neighbouring Wolsingham.

Many establishments took the spring lockdown as an opportunity to refurbish and reorganise their premises, both to comply with the government’s Covid regulations and to provide something new and different for us customers. Whether any further changes will take place in this second period of enforced closure remains to be seen, but it can only add to the number of pubs that reduced the number of real ales on offer, or remove it altogether. All perfectly understandable under the circumstances.

Meanwhile, TV chef Tom Kerridge’s three-parter about the state of the pub industry was a very interesting insight from the publican’s point of view, as he attempted to turn around the fortunes of four very different pubs across the land—a plan almost thwarted by the arrival of Covid. Perhaps the part CAMRA members and others looked forward to the most was the interview with a Pubco representative. After the encouraging chat with the pubs minister and a long-standing Pubco licensee, we looked forward to the Pubco gut being given a right going-over. What we got instead was a very chummy chat with no probing questions, and a promise from Mr Pubco that he’d have a look at one of the featured pubs. Despite the biggest barrier to the pub making a living being the cost of beer from the Pubco, their suggested solution wasn’t the glaringly obvious “we’ll charge you less for your beer” but “why not spend £20k on a pizza oven?” An opportunity missed in an otherwise very insightful series. Perhaps the fact that two of Tom’s pubs are owned by Pubcos might have something to do with it.

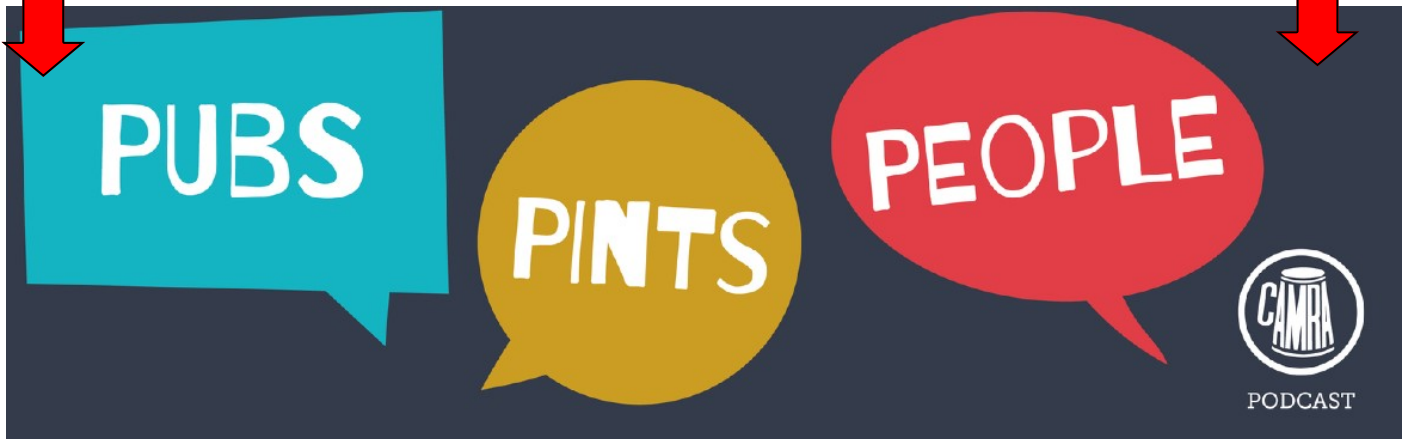
Cheers, and stay safe

Paul Dobson

<https://camra.org.uk/pullingtogether/>



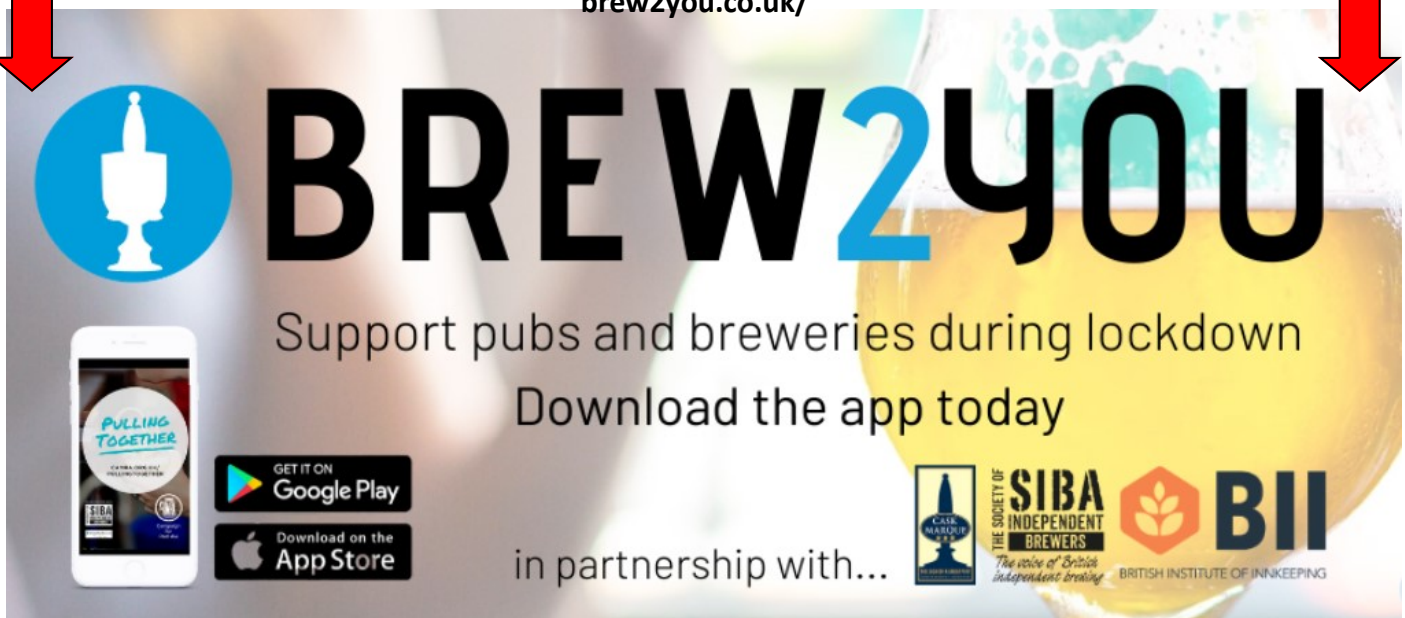
If Peter Crouch can do Podcasts, so can CAMRA! <https://camra.org.uk/podcast/>



CAMRA can help you find and order beer and cider to be delivered to your door

[https://](https://brew2you.co.uk/)

brew2you.co.uk/



The End of an Era

It's a fairly rare thing, in these days of managers rather than publicans, for someone to run the same pub for more than a few years. In Durham, we're lucky to have long-serving folks in several of "our" CAMRA area's pubs. Unfortunately, we're about to lose one of them.

One of the mainstays of the real ale scene in the Durham City area over the last couple of decades has been the **Tap & Spile at Framwellgate Moor**, which has provided an ever-changing choice of real ales, up to eight at time, plus real cider.

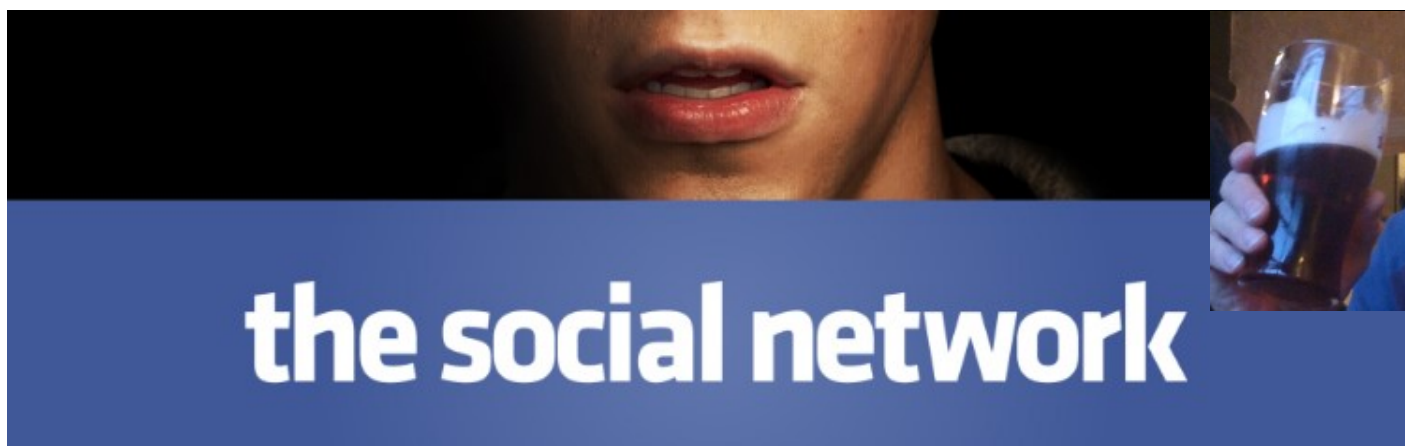
Overseeing proceedings for more years than we're polite enough to reveal has been **Lesley Fyfe**, who has maintained the pub in the manner to which we've come to expect - next to nothing's changed apart from the paintwork and the size of the collection of beer festival glasses and Good Beer Guides. Thanks to keeping a firm grip on thankfully fairly relaxed beer tie, Lesley has been able to offer a continuous supply of beers from all over the land to grateful customers in a proper pub. From her days on the committee of CAMRA Durham, Lesley has been a great supporter of Real Ale, and the reason that many in the Durham City area are fans of it —but now the time has come to move on.

She had, naturally enough, hoped for some sort of farewell to take place, but with the uncertainty created by the current COVID restrictions, to which there is no end date in sight, she's called it a day now.

It's to be hoped that Enterprise Inns can find a licensee who will carry on Lesley's good work and maintain the supply of well-kept real ale in Framwellgate Moor, thus ensuring continued visits from fans of the stuff from far and wide.

CAMRA Durham would like to take this opportunity to thank Lesley for the enthusiasm with which she's supported the real ale cause over the years, and to wish her all the best for whatever adventure is next on the agenda..





A recent Social Media post by our Pubs Officer, Dave Thornton, which pointed out the number of “To Let” signs which had appeared on pubs around Durham City seems to have generated a lot of interest. Over the days following the post, we had nearly two hundred requests from folks wishing to join the CAMRA Durham Facebook Group—which is great news, and shows that people really do have an interest in what’s happening to our pubs. It just needed bit of a nudge, unfortunately in the form of the futures of yet more well-known and popular pubs being thrown into doubt, to get the good people of Durham and beyond to register an interest. For the record, our group had 461 members when the post went live, it was shared 248 times, and the group now has 643 members—and rising. This count will probably take longer than a US presidential election!

While many of these interested parties are already members of CAMRA, many are not - and a good few—both members and non-members - expressed an interest in becoming more involved in our activities, whether they listed a real ale as their favourite tippie or not.

If you’re one of those new Facebook Group members, thanks for joining us, and please keep looking at the CAMRA Durham (Group) Facebook page for information on our pubs and clubs, and for ways you can become more involved. If you’re already a CAMRA member and you are interested in being more actively involved, please join us at one of our branch meetings or socials—they’re all online at the moment thanks to the virus, but we’d love to have your ideas and opinions. If you are one of those folks who expressed an interest in getting more involved, please get in touch either by sending us a message via the Group Page, or by email to chair@camradurham.org.uk or pubsofficer@camradurham.org.uk.

If you’re not already a CAMRA member, have a look at <https://camra.org.uk/join/> and consider adding yourself to our ranks. We always appreciate new ideas and opinions, and membership gives you a better opportunity to get those ideas and opinions heard, and to join in with active campaigning.

Basically, welcome aboard and we look forward to meeting up - virtually at first, then in person as things return to whatever passes for normality, whenever that may be.



The real Social Network

Real Beer to take away

The Duke of York, Fir Tree 01388 767429

The Grey Horse, Consett 01207 502585

The Station House, Durham Please bring your own container if possible. Check Facebook for details of what's available



Fram Ferment, Framwellgate Moor Please bring your own container if possible. Check Facebook for details of what's available

The Little Tap, King Street, Spennymoor 01388 304001. Please bring your own container if possible.

Caps Off, Bishop Auckland 07900 551754

Smokehouse, Railway Street, Bishop Auckland 07593 675590

Three Horse Shoes, Leamside 0191 584 2394

Royal George, Old Shotton 0191 5866500

Black Lion, Wolsingham 01388 527772

Ship Inn, Middlestone Village 01388 810904

Hopper House Brew Farm, Sedgfield 07947 874278

George Samuel Brewery, Shildon 07749 995449

Hill Island brewery, Durham 07740 932584

Yard of Ale Brewery, Surtees Arms, Ferryhill Station 07540 733513

Durham Brewery, Bowburn 0191 3771991

McColl's Brewery, Evenwood 01388 417250

NB We've almost certainly missed some pubs off this list, so please let us know if you know of anywhere else offering draught ale to take

away.

Thanks.



Your Branch needs you - talk to us!

Elsewhere in this edition a summary has been provided of the pubs known to us that have closed or not reopened from the original lockdown. Our knowledge however is far from complete as the information has been garnered from a very small band of members providing details about pubs that they know about. Indeed the bulk of it has been gathered by scouring social media announcements provided by pubs themselves or their web pages.

But of course not every pub is particularly good at using social media to promote themselves, and a lot that do tend to promote their food offerings rather than their drinks!

Consequently whilst our data on open and closed pubs since lockdown isn't complete, our information on what they are selling since reopening is even scander. In particular we have little idea of the amount of cask beer being offered relative to pre lockdown. It is known due to the nature of the product (shelf life) and availability many pubs will have reduced the provision or even removed cask beer from their offerings.

The branch has over 800 members but we hear from very few of them, and we don't even now how many have started going back to the pub.

So this is a plea to help to provide information about the pubs near you or the ones you pass or visit - particularly that are open or closed, what their opening times are and most importantly their cask beer offerings (or not as the case might be).

Talk to us - please don't assume we know what is happening in a particular pub, its better to get duplicate information rather than none at all.

How to do it -

Use Whatpub - YOU DO NOT NEED TO LOG IN TO WHATPUB TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON A PUB - YOU DONT EVEN NEED TO BE A CAMRA MEMBER.

Just go to **whatpub.com** on your computer or mobile device

Use the search facility to find the pub in question

Use 'Submit updates' to provide any info you like about that pub.

or

Just send an email to pub-sofficer@camradurham.org.uk

or

join the CAMRA Durham Facebook group
and leave your comment there.

Thank you!



Who'd open a brewery at a time like this?

Devilstone Brewing, which specialises in producing artisanal craft beers, including hoppy American pale ales and IPA's" has signed a three-year lease for a unit at Langley Park's Riverside Industrial Park

William Parkin, director at Devilstone Brewing Company, said: "We are really pleased with our new premises at Riverside Industrial Estate, where we will be producing and distributing our beers from, both locally and nationally.



"We will also be utilising our website and will be open to the public for purchasing directly from our brewery to take home." <https://devilstonebrewing.com>

We look forward to giving it a try—everything they produced in November sold out, which is always a good sign, and they've just released an Imperial Double Chocolate Orange Stout to follow.

Meanwhile, in **Tow Law**, the **North Pier Brew Co.** has produced its first batches of beer, and owner Josh Atkinson is currently going through the process of obtaining a premises licence. Direct delivery to your door is in the pipeline, as are plans to offer other local brews from the premises once approval is given.

Plans to begin brewing at the **Bishop Auckland Brewing Company**, situated near the town in South Church, have been shelved for the time being thanks to the impact of COVID on the licenced trade.

Brewing was due to commence in November, but current restrictions meant the lack of any outlets available to sell the brews, so the date has been put back.



Another fond farewell

Joe Davison, for many years a stalwart of the CAMRA Durham committee, has upped sticks and moved to Dumfries, where he's spent an increasing amount of time over recent years. Over the years, Joe has been a great source of information on pubs and beer in County Durham, and has served in several positions on the committee, most recently as LocAle co-ordinator. His efforts in distributing Durham Drinkers to the more far-flung corners of North West Durham have proved an invaluable source of information on the pubs in that part of our area, and CAMRA Durham wish Joe well in his new life north of the border.

November 10th Branch Meeting - *with special guests from Vaux Brewery.*

Vaux Reborn... or Vaux rises again? Or Vaux is back in the game?

We are now in our 8th month of operating as a Branch without being able to meet in pubs. This has presented us with lots of challenges, not least how to keep enthusiasm for and attendance at branch meetings. We cannot wait to be back in pubs, just as we were in January when welcoming Allendale Brewery to talk to us in the upstairs of the Station House. That was a fascinating evening, a first in what was to be a series of talks at branch meetings. Then Covid-19 hit, and we had to put plans on hold, not least because pubs and breweries were rather busy!

Fast forward to November 10th, on Zoom, which is a very different experience to a packed room, we welcomed two guests from **Vaux Brewery**. Lee Ellwood, who is the Sales Manager and Yorick, who is the chief brewer. The reinvention of this famous old Sunderland brand (evidenced by the Chair wearing a Vaux emblazoned Sunderland shirt) is of great local and national interest, and what followed was a fascinating insight in to brewing activities just outside CAMRA Durham's area.

We heard that the new Vaux buildings are in the final stages of fitting out, ready for brewing soon. Indeed, malts and other essential raw materials will arrive at the Monk Street site in the very near future. These will enable Yorick, who is a graduate of Brewlab, and who has extensive experience at British and continental brewers, to get to work on a new core range that will include a standard oatmeal stout, a session IPA and an American pale ale, with plans for a German Kolsch in the pipeline too.

In addition to these core beers, Vaux also has rights to recipes from the original Vaux Brewery, dating from the 1890s. History is at the core of this new venture, and Lee is a part of the story. He was one of the final apprentices of the old Vaux, following on from his father working there. This renaissance for Vaux is part of Sunderland's reputation for brewing, which is Europe-wide due to Brewlab training so many people in recent times.

What should we expect from Vaux? Well, in addition to the already mentioned core ales, there will be a much broader range in time, on tap as well as in cans and bottles. To facilitate experimentation, a Tap Room will be open to all, and will be the testing ground for new brews, as well as no doubt a popular watering hole on matchday, being a stone's throw from the Stadium of Light. All in all, the region will gain a new brewer, rooted in tradition, but with both eyes firmly on the future.

The meeting was asked about that future and members enthusiastically gave suggestions for future brews, which ranged from a good standard bitter, to a liquorice dark mild. CAMRA members are creative bunch! There ensued a lively discussion on yeast and for those interested, initially Vaux will use a fresh batch each time, but in time, with on-site lab facilities, reuse and development of a house strain may well take place.

We asked the question that you may well be asking right now; "how do we find out more?" Helpfully, Vaux has a website, <https://www.vaux.beer/>, and you can sign up for a newsletter. Lee and Yorick were thanked for livening up a November lockdown evening and they promised to keep us up to date with their progress. Having visitors at branch meetings is going to be an on-going feature, with when McColl's, in the shape of Danny McColl, in the diary for the near future.

Steven Spencer, CAMRA Durham Branch Secretary

Pub Stuff

As we are all aware it's been a tough time for the pub trade, what with all the lockdowns and changing regulations. After all the efforts made during and the initial lockdown to comply and be COVID safe, the November shutdown, followed by allocation into tier 3, has been a further body blow for the pubs in our branch area. Even when they were allowed to open, the 'single household' rule made it so difficult to provide a genuine pub atmosphere when you wanted to meet and socialise with friends. Of course, as a branch we have not been able, for that very reason, to have any social events or meetings.

Credit is due to our pubs that when they have been allowed to trade they have adapted with takeaway services where possible, some providing drink as well as food, and elsewhere in this edition you can find where can get cask beer for consumption at home. During the period when they were allowed to open, however, one noticeable area of concern was that some pubs were opening but with less or no cask beer available due largely to the shorter shelf life and the risk of the fast-changing rules leaving them with beer wastage, but also due the lack of availability from some of the big suppliers. It remains to be seen if and when we do emerge into a more 'normal' state how quickly cask will be re-established.

The vast majority of our pubs made excellent efforts in making them COVID secure and making a visit to them as safe and enjoyable an experience as possible, although there were two or three which were asked by the local authorities to close for a short period to make alterations to facilities and procedures - which they did. A few pubs have decided to remain closed for a while even if allowed to reopen.

The good news is that we do not currently have any new permanent closures to report where pubs have thrown in the towel for good. However, if you take a walk round Durham City, for example, at the moment you will notice the worrying 'To Let' signs appearing – on the **City Hotel**, **The Big Jug**, **The Court Inn**, and **The Fighting Cocks**, which could be a sign of things to come. Also, as you will read elsewhere, one of our long-standing leading real ale pubs **The Tap & Spile** at Framwellgate Moor has become available. Under the excellent stewardship of our friend Lesley Fyfe for many years, it's always been at the vanguard of promoting real ale in the region. We can only hope a successor with a similar outlook is found and the pub company (EI, better known as Enterprise) are supportive of a similar lease in terms of beer choice. Best wishes to Lesley for the future.

In other news, the **Toronto Lodge** (in Toronto near Bishop Auckland) has been sold by S43 to Trust Inns and has had a facelift and been renamed the **Bishop's Lodge**. It hasn't yet had the opportunity to trade.

In a similar vein, near me the **Belmont** in Belmont (still known locally to many as the Sportsman's) has been undergoing an extension to house a new kitchen, giving more space for the restaurant side but also making changes to the bar where an improved range of cask ale is promised. It is now under the auspices of Stirks butchers from Sunderland and will be known as **Stirks Italian Steakhouse at the Belmont**.

Planning and licencing has been granted for new micropubs in Consett and Seaham though it is unclear at the moment whether either or both will offer any cask beer or what the timescales may be.



In Seaham also, the reopened **Inn Between** made an announcement that it was going to introduce real ale for the first time just as the November lockdown was announced, so we will watch to see what happens.

A nice community touch from the **Green Tree** in Tudhoe , which successfully completed a project to “repurpose” a disused red telephone box on the village green as a community lending library.

You may recall there were two community-led initiatives established in our area to attempt to save two pubs in the area - the **Woodman** in Durham City and the **Times** in Dalton-le Dale. Then lockdown came and caused the initiatives to suspend. For the **Woodman** there were promising signs that the pub was going to reopen and extensive redecoration and internal work was being carried out, so the community group stood down. However this work seems to have stalled and it's not clear what the current situation is. For the **Times**, the group had restarted its work when the Plunkett Foundation opened up grant applications etc. and was about to begin a share issue process when it was announced that Punch Taverns had found a buyer and sold the pub, and so it is no longer available to the community. The group was given an indication that the buyer intends to reopen it as a pub, and so has ceased its activities. It is not known who the buyer is, or its future plans.

We now wait to see when the county may emerge from tier 3 and which pubs will reopen and, sadly, if we lose any. A reminder again, then, to please to support the pubs in the meantime, if they are offering takeaway facilities. If you fancy a takeaway meal or Sunday dinner, consider the local pub not just the nearby Indian, Chinese or pizza house – you will probably find a wider choice too. And if you can buy your beer from the pub, brewery, or bottle shop, or at least the local shop, please do. As for the supermarkets, the SPAR at Belmont has been stocking local brews (Durham Brewery), while a recent survey of the Big Four - Morrison's, Asda, Sainsbury's, and Tesco—at Bishop Auckland revealed that only Morrison's (Maxim, Tyne Bank, and Hadrian Border) and Asda (Maxim) offered anything from the North East . Basically, the big supermarkets will survive quite nicely if you buy your beer from independent traders, thank you very much.

Dave Thornton

Pubs Officer



Durham County is CAMRA Country

That was the title of the Durham Advertiser supplement in the back in early eighties....

Basically, landlords and CAMRA got together to produce a list of pubs offering real ale. As I remember, the pubs paid a small amount to have their details included – hence the absence of some well-known hostellers. Thankfully, CAMRA members John and Pauline Godfrey still have their copy, so in 2015 I thought it might be a bit of fun to go through the list and see what has become of the pubs concerned. As we can't go down the pub and talk about it five years on, we've had another look at what's what in 2020.

Pub	Then	2014	2020
The Pollards, Bishop Auckland	Mrs G.M. Taylor, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	Seven real ales on offer, now with a large restaurant to the rear	Five real ales, two real fires, restaurant as popular as ever
The Smith's Arms, Brecon Hill	Eddie & Marina Pease, Bass Extra Light	Location now known as Castle Dene, serving several ales	Seven ales, recently up for sale
Queen's Head, Cockfield	Keith & Den Clarkson, Cameron's bitter and Strongarm	Two ales from the Jennings/Marston range	No change – still a proper village local
Hardwick Arms, Sedgfield	Dennis & Ros Frampton, McEwan's 80/-	Draught Bass and alternating guest ale	Large-scale revamp in 2019, now has Herb and Hind restaurant.
Rose & Crown, Witton Park	Val & Wilf Scott, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	Closed	
Sportsman's Arms, Consett	Alan Gordon, Bass and Stones Bitter	The only one I can find in the area is at 52a Front Street, Leadgate – and it's closed	
The Sportsman, Coundon Gate – actually Canney Hill	Jeanette & Tommy Nevin, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	Demolished two years ago, now the Pottery Bank housing estate. Jeanette & Tommy are still in the area, alive and well!	Jeanette & Tommy are still in the area
King William, Shildon	Ron Jones & Derrick Read, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	Closed	After a brief incarnation as Elliott's wine bar, it's now a sweet shop
Crown, Spennymoor	Mavis & John Wilson, Vaux Samson	Closed several years ago, now a fast food outlet	No change
Imperial Hotel, Stanley	Harry & Doris Pendelton, Bass	Now offices and pub, no real ale	Now known as The Clock, no real ale

Sun, Sunnyside (sic) near Crook	Ron & Jean, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	Now the Comedian. No real ale	No real ale
Bird, Tantobie	Chris Wright, Belhaven 70/-, 80/-, 90/-, Theakston Bitter, Old Peculier, Kelly's Golden Bitter, Castle Eden Ale	Closed	Closed
Commercial, Tantobie	Eric & Jean Grosvenor, Castle Eden Ale	No real ale	One ale, same landlord for over forty years
Sportsman, Toft Hill	Jean & Brian Hall, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	One real ale which changes regularly	Still a proper village local
Surtees, Tow Law	Flo & Ranby Henderson, Lorimer's Best Scotch	Latterly known as Dan's Castle. Closed	Still closed
Black Horse, Waterhouses	Dave & Cathy Busby, Castle Eden Ale	Still going strong, three real ales	Two changing ales, always a local offering
Eden Arms, West Auckland	Gil & Jean Gilbert, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	Two real ales from Cameron's	One Camerons ale (NB apostrophe removed from Camerons by Camerons)
Square & Compass, West Cornforth	Ray & Margaret Wood, Bass and Extra Light	Three real ales	Three changing ales
Queen's, Willington	Fred & Maud Butterfield, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	Jennings Bitter, Sharp's Doom Bar	Closed, now council offices
Uplands Hotel, Crook	Mrs M.A. Hutchinson, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	Demolished for residential development	
King's, Crook	Maureen & George, Cameron's Bitter	Extended and modernised, Old Speckled Hen, Greene King IPA plus one other real ale	No real ale
Royal Oak, Cornsay Colliery	May & Cliff Whelpton, Bass and Extra Light	Black Sheep Bitter	Two real ales, usually including a local brew
Green Tree, Howden le Wear	Ken & Hilda Dinsley, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	Closed 2014	Still closed and unused

Blue Bell, Lanchester	Connie Rotherham, Vaux Samson	Closed	Closed
Hamsteels Colliery Inn, Quebec	Bass, Extra Light	Hamsteels Inn, Black Sheep Bitter	Now a tea room
Seaton Lane Inn, Seaton	Peter & Josie Hutton, Sam Smith's OBB, Theakston Bitter, Old Peculier, Jennings Bitter	Much extended, now has restaurant with rooms but retains bar. Wells Bombardier, Taylor's Landlord, plus guests	Two ales, usually from Camerons and Black sheep
Black Lion, Wolsingham	Margaret & Herbert Wallace, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	Holder of Country Cider Pub of the Year title since 2013, at least four real ales.	Unchanged, thankfully!
Old Elm Tree, Durham	Nancy & Joe Rix, Vaux Samson, Lorient's Scotch	2015 Town Pub of the Year, Hobgoblin plus four guest ales	Still a great selection of ales, and now with a large beer garden
Colpitts, Durham	Irene Spencer, Sam Smith's OBB	Carol Brown (Irene's niece), Sam Smith's OBB	New landlord, unchanged pub
Pot & Glass, Durham	Eric Armstrong, Vaux Sunderland Bitter	Now a convenience store after a spell as The Lodge	Still a shop
New Inn, Durham	Mrs D. M. Eames, Bass, Extra Light	Three ales including New Inn brand by Cameron's	Rebranded as Whitechurch café bar in 2018. Three ales, usually from McColl's, Durham, Maxim, or Oakham
Chelmsford, Ebchester	Walter & Angela Mraz, Vaux Samson	Might be closed, certainly no real ale	Open, no real ale
Cross Keys, Esh	Gordon & Judith Downson, Castle Eden Ale	Big Lamp Prince Bishop, Black Sheep Bitter, plus two guests	Usually the same offering of ale
Bay Horse, Evenwood	Norman & Brenda Seery, Castle Eden Ale	No real ale	Closed and awaiting sale
Happy Wanderer, Framwellgate Moor	John & Margaret Hunter, Bass	No real ale	Closed, awaiting new tenants
Victoria Bridge, Framwellgate Moor	Mrs Vernetta ?, Cameron's Bitter and Strongarm	Closed, has been a café	Dental surgery
Oddfellows Arms, Haswell	Audrey Terry, Bass and Extra Light	Closed	Reopened recently – no real ale

18 still selling ale in 2015, now 16

37 in original

14 closed, at least two demolished, in 2015, now 16

A Grand Day Out, vol, 2

It was stotting down, hurtling, bouncing off the paths when we left home: forget about 'spitting' being the worst type of rain, not today it wasn't. The original plan was a few of us to have a look out to the relatively new George Samuel Brewery at Shildon, and taking the train to get there. I've lost 'track' of the changing coronavirus rules and regulations since March, lockdown, shut-down, fall down and 'Tiers' (tears?) have come and gone, or are still here.

At the time of planning the visit to Shildon everything was permitted but then tighter Government rules stopped households mixing, so just the two of us left Lanchester in pouring rain, first taking the bus to Durham railway station. We had the 10:01hrs train service reserved from Durham to Darlington (seat reservations compulsory on some services), changing at Darlington and on to the 10:55hrs to Shildon. From Durham railway station I telephoned The Canteen Bar & Kitchen, which is part of the brewery building. The 'canteen' is run Laura Ferriman, who is married to Andrew Ferriman, and Andrew's responsible for the George Samuel Brewery. Laura confirmed they were still open and would keep one breakfast and one bacon sandwich for us when we arrived - I'd phoned because it would almost be lunchtime before we got there. A short blast from Durham to Darlington on the train, shuffling around the Darlington platform in our masks for not-too-long but a more rattly and clattery ride to Shildon, last stop for the train before 'plate-ends' at Bishop Auckland. It was still raining. Not too sure of the route from Shildon railway station, I'd looked on the map and knew it was only a few minutes' walk, assuming we took the right direction. We crossed the railway lines a couple of times more than we needed to via the pedestrian bridge but then found our walking route at the heritage railway line which belongs to 'Locomotion' (the National Railway Museum) at Shildon.



We followed the footpath westwards alongside the heritage railway and where the railway line turned off towards the museum we continued along the footpath which runs between Station Street and Railway Terrace, little knowing at the time what we were walking along. The footpath emerges at a roundabout on a main road, and just the other side of the roundabout is a building with shared-space where the George Samuel Brewery is located. On the roundabout there is a full-size railway signal with semaphore arm and some railway waggon wheels below.

One of the doorways took us into the part of the building where The Canteen Bar & Kitchen is located. It seems normal now writing this but then hand sanitation and the 'track and trace' contact details were still brand new, just a day or too old. Laura had everything in place and came to greet us at the door, taking us to a table with more hand sanitation then bringing us our breakfast and bacon sandwich and teas. She was getting ready for the lunchtime service and I spotted the homemade corned beef pie on the counter, and while we ate a number of lads who came in, clearly knowing where a good lunch could be found.

Our own late breakfast finished I'd already spoken to Andrew and asked if he'd show me the brewery, which is working just alongside the canteen. Now, I'm a real novice at the workings and operation of a brewery but keen to learn more and hoping not to show myself up. No bother though, Andrew clearly explained - he told me that the building used to be the 'works canteen' for Shildon waggon works and in its heyday had enough space for 1,000 men to come and eat. Originally workers could eat in the canteen even on days when they were not working. I knew that Shildon waggon works announced their closure in 1982 and at that time, 2,600 people worked there before its eventual closure on 30th June 1984.

Around the walls of the canteen/brewery are some large photographic prints of working life when the waggon works and works canteen were in operation, and Andrew said he's still adding to these photographic prints, capturing the essence of the building's previous usage. Andrew also said plenty of local people have been in and given him stories of their working life at the waggon works and using the canteen. Andrew explained



they've been in the pub trade for quite a few years, brewing his own beer, first near Northallerton, then in Spennymoor and also brewing for others. Not only did this location have heritage but the layout and construction of the building along with a heavy duty power supply made it a suitable for his brewing equipment. So, early in 2020 they began work creating the brewery and canteen, and continued doing this during the first lockdown. Andrew took me through his brewing process, showing me some innovations of his own to produce the beers he wanted to create. As well as beer from the pump, bottled beer is also available.

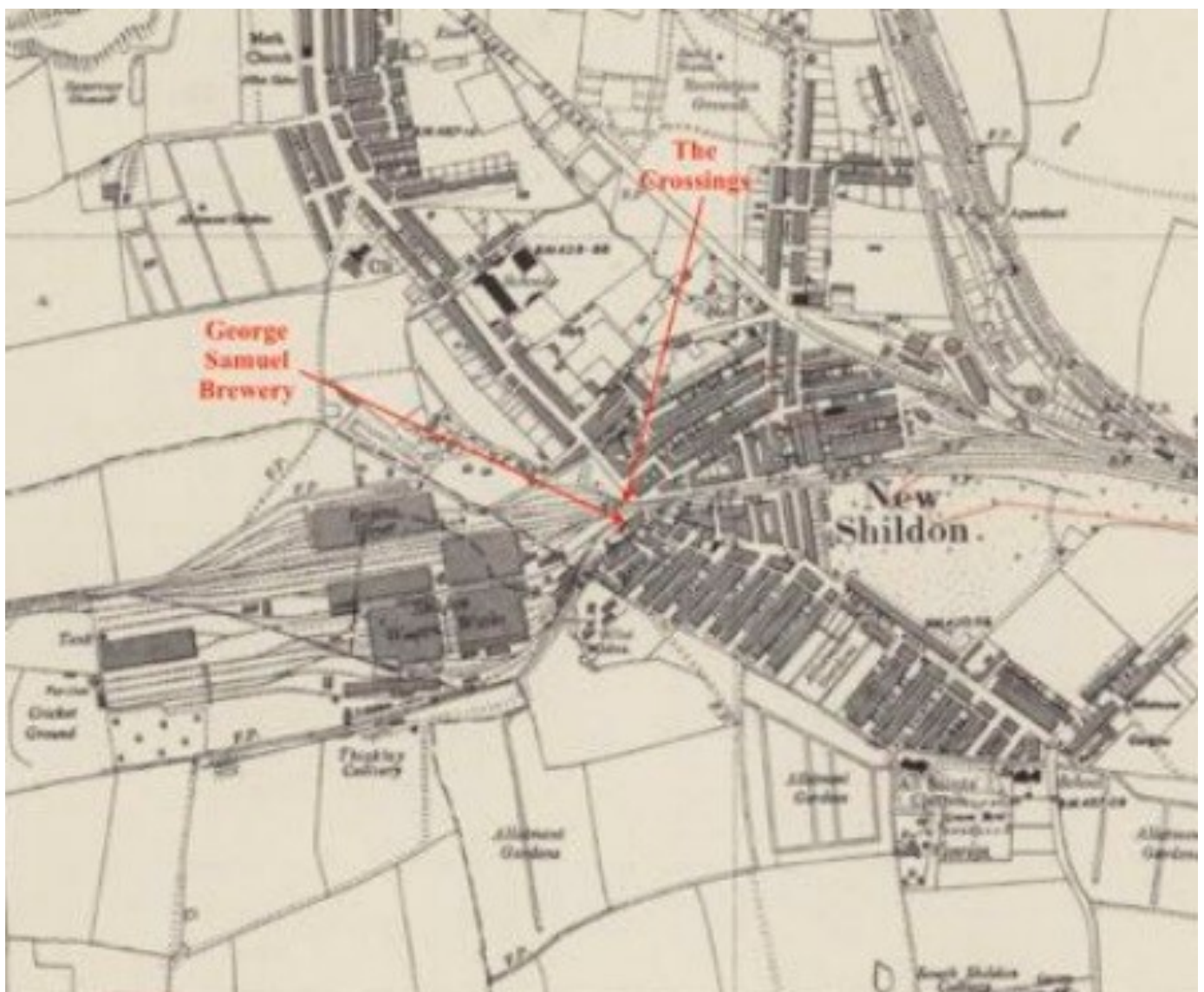
On the day we visited, there were three beers to try, **Harvey**, **Travelling Light**, and **Locomotion No1**. We tried all three, all different but for me the **Harvey**, a Porter, was delicious - another pint please! Since our visit Andrew has produced plenty of other beers with no doubt more to come. Easy to see where some of the ideas for the beer names come from but we asked about the name of the brewery, and it turns out 'George' and 'Samuel' are the middle names of their two children, which is nice, but somehow they also seem to suit the name of the brewery.

We left and had a wander around outside, discovering yet another important piece of railway history and heritage, as the footpath we had walked along to get to the brewery continues on the opposite side of the building, and there is another railway signal with semaphore arm here., as well as some of the original stone equivalents of today's sleepers. We realised that from Shildon railway station we had walked along the original route of the Stockton-Darlington railway. The area where the brewery (works canteen) is located now is known as the 'Crossings' and on 27th September 1825, Locomotion No.1 with George Stephenson at the controls, set off from near here for the nine mile journey to Darlington. In 1825, while the steam train had been invented for some years, railway stations hadn't - so tickets were sold from the nearby Masons Arms pub (renamed The Crossings, now the Cape to Cairo restaurant). Three hundred tickets were sold, but some estimates suggest over 700 people were crammed on board the mixture of 36 waggons carrying coal as well as passengers.

It had stopped raining and we retraced our route home, with the same mixture of railway and bus. Like hundreds of other pubs and breweries trying to manage we wish Andrew and Laura success and look forward to a return visit, hopefully in the not too distant future.



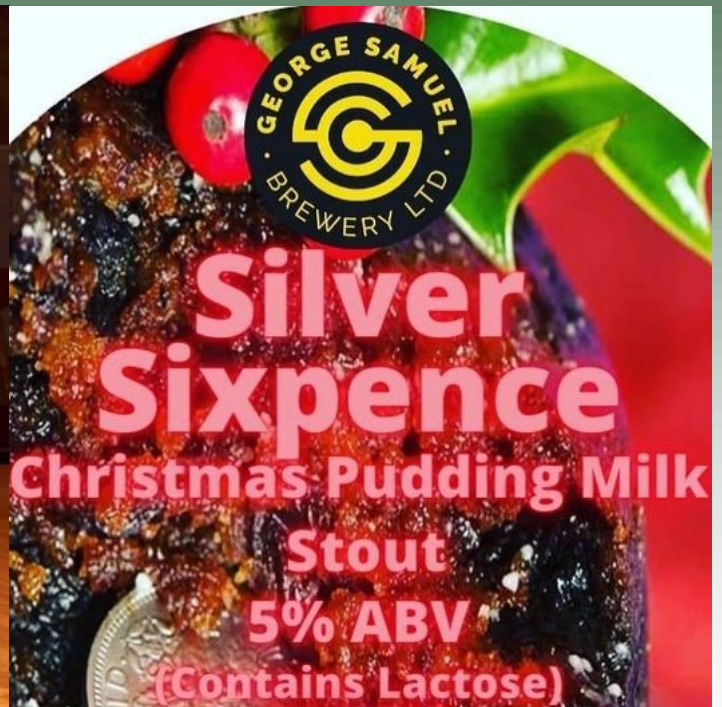
The “hidden” semaphore signal adjacent to the path, along with some of the original stone track seatings



Christmas is coming.....



Yard of Ale, Ferryhill Station



George Samuel, Shildon



Durham Brewery, Bowburn



Hill Island, Durham City



McColl's, Evenwood



Lockdown Hero Recognition

Lockdown Hero

Thu, 10/12/2020 - 17:02 | webmaster

We would like to invite you nominations of a Pub, Club, Brewery or Bottle Shop in the CAMRA Durham area who have gone the extra mile, have shown community spirit & support during the COVID19 emergency & who you feel deserve recognition from CAMRA for their endeavours

This includes acts of kindness & support for vulnerable members of our community, carers, & our key/emergency workers.

Name of the nominee, (Pub, Club, Brewery etc) *

Reason(s) for nomination *

Your name (If you wish to provide)

Nip across to <https://www.camradurham.org.uk/lockdown-hero> and let us know who you think deserves recognition for going the extra mile



Lockdown Hero Recognition